the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and all States of the region to co-exist peacefully within secure and internationally recognised boundaries.

5 March 1997

Irregularitiea by ICCR

6129. SHRI N.N. KRISHANDAS

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE :

SHRI T. GOVINDAN :

SHRI VIJAY ANNAJI MUDE :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ICCR got Azad Bhawan White washed during 1996 costing Rs. 2.62 lakhs without calling any tender/quotations and without approaching CPWD for this purpose;

(b) whethr it is a fact that the said bill was settled/ paid to the contractor without approval from President, ICCR, as is compulsory for each project, exceeding expenditure of Rs. 2.00 lakhs; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take against the defaulting officers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. In the first instance the Council approached the CPWD for carrying out the white washing of the Azad Bhawan in 1996. The CPWD declined in writing to undertake the work. Thereafter sealed quotations were invited from differnt firms and the job was awarded to the firm whose rates were the lowest. The whitewashing was part of the renovation of Azad Bhawan undertaken in 1995-1996 with the approval and at the initiative of President, ICCR.

(c) The question does not arise.

Drinking Water to Vypin Islands

6130. SHRIMATI RATNMALA D. SAVANOOR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is growing agitation among the inhabitants of Vypin Island off Koshi for the lack of drinking water facilities;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any review of the existing arrangement to provide drinking water to the Islanders;

(c) if so, the strategy formulated by the Government to provide adequate drinking water to the people of Vypin Island ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) No such report has been received from the State Government regarding lack of drinking water facilities in Vypin Island leading to growing agitation among the inhabitants.

(b) and (c) Questions does not arise in view of the reply to part (a) above.

Oil Exploration

6131. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to de-regulate oil exploration activity and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the role assigned in this regard to ONGC, Oil India Limited, Private Sector and Foreign Oil Companies;

(c) whether the Government propose to put ONGC and Oil India Ltd., at par with the private companies in bidding process participation; and

(d) the fate of current cess on oil production and royalty fixed at present ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. In order to encourage private sector participation, Government of India has recently announced the New Exploration Licensing Policy. The salient features of policy are:-

— Open availability of exploration acreage in addition to existing bidding rounds.

— Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd., and Oil India Ltd. to compete for obtaining exploration licences on competitive basis alongwith other private sector companies.

— Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd. and Oil India Ltd. to be provided a level playing field by providing same fiscal and contract terms as available for private companies.

— Special package to encourage exploration in deep water and frontier areas.

— Freedom to contractors for marketing of crude oil and gas in the domestic market.

(d) Cess, which was earlier levied on crude production has been abolished for the blocks offered under NELP and Royalty will be payable at the rate of 12.5% and 10% respectively of the international price of crude oil for onland areas and offshore areas. Half of the royalty from the offshore area will be credited to a hydrocarbon development fund to promote and fund exploration related activities, such as acquisition of geological data on poorly explored basins,

marked decrease in the overall level of

promotion of investment opportunities in the upstream sector, institution building etc.

Crisis of Power in Andhra Pradesh

6132. SHRI P.V. RAJESHWAR RAO : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether some new power projects have been set-up in Andhra Pradesh during the last one year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether some proposals are pending for clearance with the CEA;

(d) whether the Government propose to set-up some power projects in the private sector on the pattern of 'Dabhol' in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) and (b) The details of capacity addition in Andhra Pradesh during 1996-97 are given below :

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Capacity (MW)
1.	Kothagudem (T)	250
2.	Jegurupadu CCGT (T)	3 x 52.8
3.	Godavari GT	2 x 47

(c) As on date, one project proposal of Andhra Pradesh viz. Ramagundam Extension Thermal Power Project (M/s BPL Power Projects (AP) Ltd.) of 2 x 260 MW is under examination in the Central Electricity Authority for techno-economic clearance.

(d) and (e) Jegurupadu CCGT (216 MW) by M/s. GVK Industries and Vishakhapatnam Thermal Plant (1040 MW) by M/s Hinduja National Power Corporation Ltd. in Andhra Pradesh have been structured on the basis of counter guarantee by Government of India.

Enron

6133 SHRI S.D.N.R WADIYAR . Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether proposal from US based Company Enron, to set up a Power generating station in Karnataka was under the consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the location, cost, capacity, share equity etc. of the proposed power project; and

(d) the decision taken by the Government for early commencing of the project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Ban on Recruitment

6134. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a ban was imposed on fresh recuritment of Government employees at certain levels;

(b) if so, the period during which the ban has been in operation;

(c) the total saving achieved due to this measure; and

(d) whether the Government propose of lift this ban ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) Government have not issued any general orders putting a total ban on recruitment for Government jobs.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

Indian Ocean Rim

6135. SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS :

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO:

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :

SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY :

SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA :

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Ocean Prime Countries have decided to form an association;

(b) if so, the objectives and purpose of the association;

(c) the names of member States and the seat of the association;

(d) the role that India would like to play in promoting the objectives of the association;

(e) whether the making of Indian Ocean Rim may have any adverse effect on Regional grouping like SAARC; and